

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 /070 W
-----121323Z 042136 /44

O R 121133Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7820
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
EUCOM
USCINCEUR
CINCUSAFE
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 4494

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S POST-ELECTION MEETING WITH FORMER
PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT

REF: ANKARA 4383 (DTG 080820Z JUN 77)

1. SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 11, MY WIFE AND I SPENT
AN HOUR WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT AND MRS. ECEVIT
IN THEIR HOME ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF ANKARA. WHILE PURPOSE
WAS TO SAY GOODBYE, I HAD OPPORTUNITY TO TALK AT SOME LENGTH
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WITH THE FORMER PRIMIN ABOUT THE POST-ELECTION SITUATION HERE.

2. ECEVIT WAS PLEASED WITH THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLES' PARTY
(R.P.P.)'S SHOWING IN THE JUNE 5 ELECTIONS IN THAT HE
BELIEVED IT HAD MADE THE BIGGEST PERCENTAGE GAIN IN
STRENGTH FROM ONE ELECTION TO THE NEXT OF ANY SOCIALIST
PARTY HE KNEW OF. HE MADE NO ATTEMPT, HOWEVER, TO HIDE

HIS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT HE HAD NOT OBTAINED HIS GOAL OF A MAJORITY OF PARLIAMENTARY SEATS, A GOAL WHICH WOULD HAVE PERMITTED HIM TO GOVERN WITHOUT HAVING TO RELY ON THE HELP OF PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM OUTSIDE HIS PARTY. NEVERTHELESS HE WAS GOING TO MAKE A STRONG TRY, HE SAID, TO PUT TOGETHER A GOVERNMENT.

3. IN HIS INITIAL EFFORTS, HE WOULD SEEK THE 13 ADDITIONAL VOTES HE NEEDED BY APPROACHING THE INDIVIDUAL PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO HE FELT WOULD BE MOST LIKELY "TO PUT NATIONAL INTERESTS ABOVE PARTY CONSIDERATIONS", AND WHO MIGHT BE MOST PREPARED TO BREAK THEIR OWN PARTY RANKS TO INSTALL HIM. HIS BASIC ARGUMENT WOULD BE THAT TURKEY'S VITAL, OVERRIDING AND IMMEDIATE NEED AT THIS TIME WAS FOR A VIABLE GOVERNMENT AND, GIVEN THE POST-ELECTION PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION, HE WAS, WITH A LITTLE HELP, IN A FAR BETTER POSITION TO ACHIEVE THIS THAN ANYONE ELSE.

4. THROUGH THIS MEANS, ECEVIT HOPED HE COULD AVOID HAVING TO TRY TO FORM A GOVERNMENT WITH ERBAKAN'S HELP. THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) LEADER "HAS LEARNED NOTHING" AND WAS "AS BAD AS EVER". HENCE, ATTEMPTING TO DEAL WITH TURKEY'S PRESSING PROBLEMS WITH ERBAKAN IN THE SAME GOVERNMENT, SAID ECEVIT, WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND HE WAS DETERMINED TO AVOID THIS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. HE HAD FOR A TIME HOPED HE MIGHT GET SOME OF THE ERBAKAN PEOPLE FROM THE MORE MODERATE WING OF ERBAKAN'S PARTY TO SPLIT AWAY AND FORM A COALITION WITH HIM. THIS GROUP WOULD BE LED BY KORKUT OZAL, A CONFIDENTIAL

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POTENTIAL ERBAKAN RIVAL WITHIN THE NSP AND RESPECTED MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE IN BOTH THE DEMIREL AND EARLIER ECEVIT COALITION GOVERNMENTS. IT PRESENTLY LOOKED HOWEVER, AS THOUGH THAT WAS NOT REPEAT NOT GOING TO WORK, AND HE WAS NOW BACK LOOKING FOR ALL HIS 13 NEEDED VOTES ELSEWHERE. HOWEVER, THIS MARGIN, HE CONCLUDED, WAS "A DIFFICULT ONE TO MAKE UP".

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ANKARA 4494

5. WHEN I ASKED IF HE WOULD BE WILLING TO ENTER INTO A COALITION WITH ERBAKAN IF ALL ELSE FAILED, ECEVIT SAID HE HAD NOT REPEAT NOT RULED THIS OUT. HE REPEATED, HOWEVER, THAT HE WAS GOING TO MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO AVOID IT, AND HE ALSO AGAIN INDICATED THAT HE WAS NOT ENTIRELY SURE THAT SUCH A COALITION COULD BE ACHIEVED EVEN IF HE FINALLY DECIDED TO ATTEMPT IT. IN RESPONSE TO MY FURTHER QUESTION AS TO HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE TO GET ALL OF THIS SORTED OUT, ECEVIT SAID THERE WAS NO TELLING. IT COULD COME FAIRLY SOON BUT IT COULD ALSO TAKE "MANY WEEKS". HE NOTED IN PASSING THAT THE NEW CONFIDENTIAL

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PARLIAMENT WOULD BE PRETTY WELL PARALYZED DURING THE SAME PERIOD BECAUSE THE ELECTION OF ITS SPEAKER WOULD HAVE TO BE THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS, AND THE QUESTION OF WHO WAS TO GET THAT PRESTIGIOUS POSITION WAS LIKELY TO BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE MANEUVERING TO FORM EITHER AN ECEVIT-LED MAJORITY COALITION OR TO WORK OUT A DEAL WHICH PERMITTED AN ECEVIT-LED MINORITY GOVERNMENT.

6. FINALLY, IN DISCUSSING WHY THE ELECTION RESULTS HAD FALLEN SHORT OF HIS HOPES, ECEVIT SAID THAT HIS PARTY HAD FAILED TO DO QUITE AS WELL AS HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT

IN SEVERAL KEY AREAS. HE ATTRIBUTED THIS TO "A FALSE IMAGE OF WHAT OUR PARTY REALLY STANDS FOR". IN THE AREAS HE WAS REFERRING TO, HIS PARTY HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY PORTRAYED AS EXTREME LEFTIST AND ANTI-NATIONALIST, AND THIS HAD COST HIM SOME VERY KEY VOTES.

7. COMMENT. ECEVIT IS CLEARLY GOING TO MAKE A DETERMINED EFFORT TO FORM THE NEXT GOVERNMENT HERE WITHOUT ERBAKAN IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, WITH HIM IF ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. WHILE HE IS HOPEFUL THAT HE WILL BE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER, AND PRESENTLY HE HAS THE BEST CHANCE AT IT OF ANYBODY, I RECEIVED THE DEFINITE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS NOT FULLY CONFIDENT THAT HE WILL ACHIEVE HIS GOAL. IN A STRIKING WAY HIS MOOD WAS SIMILAR TO THE ONE I ENCOUNTERED IN MY PRIVATE MEETING WITH DEMIREL A FEW DAYS EARLIER (REFTEL). WHILE EACH COULD FIND ASPECTS OF THE RECENT ELECTION TO TAKE CONSIDERABLE COMFORT FROM, BOTH LEADERS ARE FUNDAMENTALLY DISCOURAGED WITH THE RESULTS AND NEITHER SEE THE FUTURE WITH EITHER THE CLARITY OR CONFIDENCE THEY SEEK TO INSTILL IN THEIR PUBLIC STATEMENTS.

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Message Attributes

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